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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Austria
SUBJECT 1953 Field Exercises of the 287th Guards Rifle Regiment

REPORT

DATE DISTR. 16 September 1954

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ARMY review completed.

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25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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1953 FIELD EXERCISES

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1. [redacted] the 95th Gds. Rifle Div. did not participate in any division-level, or higher, field exercises during 1953, since it was responsible for the protection of the demarcation line along the Czech-Austrian-German borders of the Soviet Zone, Austria.

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There were, however, battalion-size field exercises conducted by the 287th and 290th Gds. Rifle Regts., 95th Gds. Rifle Div.

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25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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February 1953 Field Exercise

2. Sometime in February 1953 (exact date unknown), the entire 2nd Rifle Bn., 287th Gds. Rifle Regt., entrained at Steyregg ~~N 48-17, E 14-72~~ for Goepfritz, near Allentsteig ~~N 48-41, E 15-19~~. (See Encl. A.) All of the regiment's artillery units - that is, one battery of 120-mm mortars, one battery of 76-mm SP guns (SU-76) and one battery of 57-mm AT guns - accompanied the 2nd Rifle Bn. on this move. The 1st and 3rd Bns., 287th Gds. Rifle Regt., remained at their posts and guarded the demarcation line. Since the 2nd Rifle Bn. was not responsible for guarding any portion of the line, troop positions did not have to be reorganized because of its departure.
3. When the battalion arrived at Allentsteig, an unknown number of tanks, howitzers and field guns were attached to it for the exercise. These were to represent one battalion of T-34 tanks, one battalion of 122-mm howitzers and one battalion of 122-mm field guns. They were subordinate to the How., Arty. and Tk-SP Regts., 95th Gds. Rifle Div., which were stationed at the Allentsteig training area throughout the year.
4. The first portion of the exercise consisted of a reinforced battalion in attack. One of the rifle platoons acted as the enemy. (This platoon represented an enemy battalion.) The remainder of the 2nd Rifle Bn., along with the other above-mentioned units, was organized for the exercise. At dusk, men moved out and established a line of departure. Everyone dug in. At 0700, the reinforced battalion launched the attack. Simulated preparatory fire (blank rounds) was laid down by all supporting weapons. The rifle companies then moved out behind the tanks and SP's toward the enemy, located in trenches 300 m. to the front. After the objective was taken, the infantry mounted the tanks (8 to 10 riflemen per tank) and continued in pursuit of the retreating enemy for about seven kilometers. In the meantime, the mortars, AT guns, howitzers and field guns kept moving forward to support the pursuit. The attack ended at this point.
5. The attack was organized and led by the deputy regimental commander of the 287th Gds. Rifle Regt. (The regimental commander was supposed to have organized and led the exercise, but he was sick.) At its conclusion, the former held a critique. He rated the attack a mere "three" (satisfactory). Its purpose had been to give all the officers practice in a combined arms attack. Stress was placed on control by the officers and coordination between the supporting arms. The deputy regimental commander was disturbed by several factors - the failure of men to dig in properly; lack of enthusiasm by troops because of the cold weather; poor camouflage by all; improper moving out procedures by tanks and SP's, causing them often to get into each other's line of fire; poor coordination between supporting arms; riflemen straying too far away from the tanks; poor communications, and lack of control by the officers.
6. The second half of the exercise consisted of a reinforced battalion in defense. The same units occupied a straight-line defense position, and it was assumed that friendly units were on the right and left of them. The men dug in partially; the infantry was placed two companies forward and one company back. Tanks and SP's were placed along the front row of trenches, and the 57-mm AT guns were positioned in likely avenues of approach. The MG Co., 2nd Rifle Bn., attached a platoon of three 7.62-mm HMG's, GORYUNOV M1943, to each rifle company. The battalion and

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regimental mortar batteries and howitzers and field guns from the division's How. and Arty. Regts. took up positions to the rear. Since it was so cold, troops lit fires for which they were later reprimanded. The men sat in their positions all day and night, while the tanks, SP's, mortars and howitzers fired dummy rounds.

7. The entire exercise lasted 12 days. In addition to the events described above, the 2nd Rifle Bn. troops followed a normal garrison training schedule when not engaged in the exercise.
8. Various forms of communication were employed during the exercise. In the attack, contact between rifle companies and the battalion was maintained by the RBM-1 radio. The radios and their operators were provided by the signal platoon subordinate to the 2nd Rifle Bn. Normally, there were no RBM-1 radios at company level. In addition, each company kept a runner at the battalion CP. There were no radios at rifle platoon level. Each platoon leader kept a runner at the company CP. Rifle platoon leaders used hand signals and their voice for control purposes during the attack. A system of signal flares had also been worked out by the battalion CO prior to the attack. Two green flares meant attack; one red flare signified open fire.
9. The artillery, mortars and howitzers each maintained their own OP's on the front lines. Each OP had an unknown type of radio. Source believed that the deputy regimental commander at the battalion CP maintained contact with all supporting weapons, either through radio or through a liaison officer who had radio contact with his unit.
10. Communication between tanks and SP's was via radio located in these vehicles. [redacted] the entire net was on the same channel. Communication between SP's, tanks and riflemen was by voice and by hand signals, and was particularly poor.
11. In the defensive situation, communication was by radio and TAI-43 telephone. Wire was laid in series from the battalion CP to each rifle company. There was no wire communication between rifle platoons, which used runners instead. Communication by TAI-43 phone was also set up between the battalion CP and the CP's of the tank, SP, howitzer, mortar and AT units.
12. [redacted] each regiment of the 95th Gds. Rifle Div. participated in a similar-type exercise during 1953, but at different times. He could give no details.

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August 1953 Field Exercise

13. At some unknown date in August 1953, the entire 2nd Rifle Bn., 287th Gds. Rifle Regt., and the regimental artillery, consisting of four SP (SU-76) guns, one battery of 57-mm AT guns and one battery of 120-mm mortars, went from Auhof /N 48-21, E 14-20/ to Allentsteig via organic transportation. The regiment's 8th Rifle Co., 3rd Rifle Bn., also accompanied these units. In the meantime, the 1st and 3rd Rifle Bns., minus the 8th Rifle Co., were to continue occupying positions along the demarcation line during this exercise.
14. Upon arrival in Allentsteig, this group was reinforced by six 122-mm field guns, 10 T-34 tanks, 4-5 SP's (SU-76) and 6 122-mm howitzers from the Arty., Tk-SP and How. Regts., 95th

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Gds. Rifle Div. These weapons represented one field artillery battalion, one howitzer battalion, one tank battalion, and one SP battalion. (The number of weapons in a normal battalion would be considerably more.)

15. Training was broken down into three phases, which were again organized and led by the deputy regimental commander. It included the following:
 - a. Reinforced rifle battalion in attack - The same tactics described in the first portion of the February 1953 exercise, as described above, were followed. The 8th Rifle Co. acted as the enemy. Again, after seizing the objective, infantry troops boarded tanks and SP's, 8 to 10 per vehicle, and pursued the enemy for 6 to 7 km. Top speed in the pursuit was 10-12 km. Over half of the SP's and T-34 tanks bogged down. This exercise lasted only one day, and no live rounds were fired.
 - b. Reinforced rifle battalion in defense - The same tactics described in the defensive part of the exercise above, were employed and a counterattack was added to it. The 8th Rifle Co. again acted as the enemy. Defense positions were occupied for a day and night.
 - c. Reinforced rifle company in attack - This exercise was conducted on a specially-constructed firing range. It lasted for three days and was conducted during daylight hours only. Two rifle platoons took their positions on the firing line at the same time. To their front were three trenches of silhouette targets, the first being 200 m. away, the second 400 m. away and the third 1,000 m. away. Targets were of the bobbing type. In addition to the two platoons, the company's MG platoon was also on the line. Both MG's and riflemen fired as the target appeared in the first trench. Behind the firing line, six 82-mm mortars and four SU-76 guns fired at targets far beyond the third trench. When the targets in the first trench went down, the infantry, tanks and SU-76's moved forward to attack that trench. After it was seized, targets appeared in the second trench and were fired upon by the infantry. Tanks and SP's continued to fire on their distant targets. The same procedure continued until the third trench was seized. Live ammunition was used for this exercise only.
16. Communications used for the reinforced battalion in attack and in defense were the same as for the February 1953 exercise.

A critique of the reinforced battalion in attack and in defense was again held by the deputy regimental CO. He rated the exercise a "three" and pointed out the same faults he cited in the February 1953 exercise.

Ten days elapsed from the time the battalion left its home station until the time it returned. In addition to the exercise, the infantry troops followed a normal garrison training schedule.

October 1953 Field Exercise

17. The October 1953 exercise was held for the benefit of a commission from Headquarters, CGF, which was making a training proficiency check. The commission was headed by Brig. Gen. KORSHUNOV, Chief, Operations Sec., CGF. The exercise was, for all practical purposes, a repetition of the February and August 1953 drills of a reinforced rifle battalion in attack.

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18. Members of the commission who checked the 287th Gds. Rifle Regt. were part of a larger group that had been broken down to check training proficiency throughout the entire 95th Gds. Rifle Div. The following officers inspected the 2nd Rifle Bn. in Allentsteig during the exercise: two officers studied weapon tactics; two officers inspected "engineer" tactics (that is, digging in, vehicles, camouflage and construction of firing points); and Brig. Gen. KORSHUNOV and two other officers inspected the overall tactics of the reinforced rifle battalion in attack.
19. A larger group also inspected the battalion while it was in garrison in Auhof prior to the exercise. This group was broken down as follows: five officers inspected political training; two officers checked physical training; three officers watched garrison training; one officer studied clothing and equipment facilities; one, regimental vehicles and one, food and storage facilities.
20. The 2nd Rifle Bn., the regimental artillery and the regiment's 8th Rifle Co., 3rd Rifle Bn., all entrucked to Allentsteig to participate in the exercise. The 1st and 3rd Rifle Bns., minus the 8th Rifle Co., continued to occupy their positions on the demarcation line. The same units as for the August 1953 exercise were attached to the 2nd Rifle Bn. when it arrived in Allentsteig.
21. The reinforced battalion in attack maneuver was run off again, just as it was in February and August 1953. However, the attack was organized and led by Brig. Gen. KORSHUNOV. The critique following the exercise was given by Col. KLUYEV, Chief, Operations Sec., 95th Gds. Rifle Div. He noted the same faults as were cited in the two previous exercises. His remarks were not a reflection on Brig. Gen. KORSHUNOV, but were, instead, directed at the junior officers and EM who failed to make the exercise a big success. The battalion was again rated a "three".
22. No other exercises were conducted on this occasion. This particular one lasted three days, two of which were spent in traveling.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

23. During the August 1953 exercise [redacted] some rifle companies and other unknown elements of the 290th Gds. Rifle Regt., 95th Gds. Rifle Div., arrive at Allentsteig [redacted]

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24. [redacted] divisional CPX's were held three times a year in the 95th Gds. Rifle Div. [redacted]

Enclosure A:

Training Area of the 287th Gds. Rifle Regt. in Allentsteig

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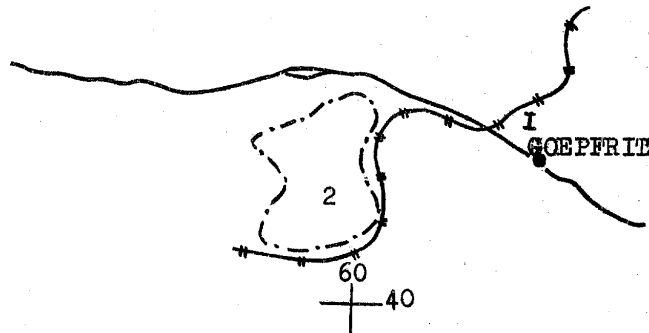
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Enclosure A

Training Area of the 287th Gds Rifle Regt in ALLENTSTEIG
(4841N-1519E)

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3 ● ALLENTSTEIG

Map Ref:

1:100,000, Middle Danube

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● DOELLERSHEIM

LEGEND

1. Railroad station in GOEPFRITZ
2. Tent area in forest
3. ALLENTSTEIG railroad station
4. Training area for attack and defense exercises
5. DOELLERSHEIM railroad station

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